

# **“We Are The Ones We’ve Been Waiting For”**

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“This is where we are. Where do we go from here? First, we must massively assert our dignity and worth. We must stand up amidst a system that still oppresses us and develop an unassailable and majestic sense of values. We must no longer be ashamed of being black.”

Martin Luther King Jr.  
*Where do we go from here?*

There were many heroes during the civil rights movement. They all had their own story to tell. At this point in time, Dr. King stands out above the rest.

Dr. King's legacy has carried on for many years. The biggest proof is that we have had an African American president for the last two years. This legacy will continue to carry on for many more. I feel as if the world is taking not only the African American race, but all people of color, into a new reality. This is all because of Dr. King and his dream. As a young African American woman who has ambitions to do big things for this country and more importantly her community, I am going to try to do my part to continue that dream.

My biggest dream for my life is to become an accomplished dancer. I am determined to use my dance ability to help others. My goal is to create a dance studio in New York for underprivileged children who have the talent but do not necessarily have the money for classes. I believe that if you are willing to work hard it will pay off in the future.

“We are the ones we have been waiting for”... what does that mean? In order to understand this quote, you must use critical thinking and analyze it. My interpretation of this is that if we want to make a difference, we, meaning those who are influenced and inspired by Dr. King’s legacy, have to take the initiative to do it. Dr. King had the courage to stand up for his people and worked diligently to bring integration to the south.

We must be like Dr. King and make the changes that we want to see. I think that this generation of future heroes is going to be the one to make the changes we want to see happening in our neighborhoods and communities. The problems of today are different than the ones during the civil rights movement but the principles behind accomplishing them are the same. If we address and fix today’s problems, we will make the lives of the children in the future better. This all ties into Dr. King’s dream to better the lives of others.

We are the ones only because we are a product of those generations who came before us. My African American grandmother was a Registered Nurse for 27 years at Harborview Medical Center. Many people told her that she was not fit to have that high of a position. They said that African Americans were supposed to be Licensed Practical Nurses (L.P.N). Through it all she persevered. As a black woman who was treated differently because of the field she was in and her race, she really looked up to Dr. King. He inspired her to look above all those naysayers and stay true to herself. My granny thought that the quote meant that change is beginning and help has arrived meaning, President Barack Obama.

Another person in my life who understands racism is my mother. As a child people teased my mom because she had a darker complexion and was smart. Teachers even gave her bad grades because they didn't want her to succeed. Today she is an African American math coach at a private school. She holds both a masters and PH.D in mathematics. To reach the level that she is on, she went through people telling her that she would fail. Just like Dr. King, she fought for what she believed in and is now fulfilling her dream. I stand on her shoulders.

My mom felt like the words "we are the ones that we have been waiting for" meant that the African Americans, in the time of Dr. King, felt like the only way to better themselves, or to get an education, was to go to school with or do things that Caucasian people did. In reality, they only needed to rely on themselves. You cannot look to other people to help yourself succeed. You must look at yourself and figure out what you can do to make your life better.

I come from a long generation of leaders. Evidently it has passed on to me. My grandmother has always told me that we are to lead and never to follow. Children in this decade and in the future need people in their lives to inspire them just like my elders have done for me. Dr. King has inspired many people around the world to be leaders and to stand up for what they believe in. Without Dr. King and the other civil rights activists in his time, the African American community would not be at the place that it is today. I am happy to say that I am doing my part in contributing to the continuation of Dr. King's legacy.

As you can see, there are many ways to interpret these words based on your life experience, outlook, and intellectual thought process. As I am thinking back, I realize how much my life would be different without Dr. King. Even though I do

not and never have lived in the south, Dr. King's movement still had an effect on me and my life. He inspired me to take chances and stand up for what I believe. Let us carry on Dr. King's dream because we are the ones we have been waiting for.

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